

## CLAIM OR CLAIMS

### WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A decoding device for analyzing communication protocols comprising:

5           a generic decoder into which a limited number of protocol descriptions may be loaded, the protocol descriptions being capable of being interpreted by the generic decoder; and

10           a specific decoder designed for a certain protocol description, the generic and specific decoders being reversibly connected.

2. The decoding device as recited in claim 1 wherein the generic decoder comprises at least one element function that may be overlaid by a corresponding element function of the specific decoder.

15           3. The decoding device as recited in claim 2 wherein the one overlaid element function may be interpreted by the generic decoder.

4. A method of setting up a decoding device comprising the steps of:

20           provisioning a generic decoder into which a limited number of protocol descriptions of communication protocols may be loaded, the protocol descriptions being capable of being interpreted by the generic decoder;

            provisioning a specific decoder for a certain protocol description; and

            reversibly connecting the generic and specific decoders to form the decoding device.

5. The method according to claim 4 wherein the generic decoder comprises at least one element function overlaid by a corresponding element function of the specific decoder during connection of the generic decoding with the specific decoder.

